

The ACS Newsletter

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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U. S.
EMBASSY,
DHAKA

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Happy New Year 2017

My dear fellow American citizens:

As you have seen recently in the news, the security situation is still one that requires caution. The Department of State still carries a Travel Warning for Bangladesh and we urge you to re-read it periodically so that you do not become complacent. A couple of good habits to develop, if you haven't already done so, are:

-- if you read and speak Bengali, make sure you pay attention to local newspapers and TV and radio reports that may have current information that you should be aware of.

-- if you do not read or speak Bengali, please make sure you read a couple of the local English-language newspapers daily.

-- if you have family in the U.S., or in other countries, please keep in touch with them regularly – not necessarily “daily” or “weekly,” but on a fairly routine schedule (i.e., not “every two days for two weeks,” then

nothing for two months). If you only call once every other week, then your relatives won't panic during the “off” week!

Also, remember that as a U.S. citizen in a foreign country, your passport is very important. Please keep it up-to-date



and renew it early when it nears expiration. Most Embassies and Consulates recommend that you look into the process a year before it expires. At that time, decide the best time that suits your travel plans. Remember, you will also have to renew your Bangladesh visa, and you may have a lot of other long-term visas that might not transfer from your old passport to your new automati-

cally.

We encourage you to look at our website regularly for up-to-date information <https://bd.usembassy.gov/>. If you have a question that isn't answered there, please drop us a line at DhakaACS@state.gov. And don't forget to look at the Department of State website <https://travel.state.gov/>, especially the Country Specific Information for Bangladesh <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country/bangladesh.html>. Also, if you travel to any third countries, remember we have a Country Specific Information sheet for every country, so you can double-check visa and entry requirements, safety and security information, health information, and much more!

Wishing you all a very Happy New Year!

Elizabeth P. Gourlay
Consul General

Adult passport renewal by mail

Effective December 1, 2016, adult U.S. passport holders in Bangladesh may renew their ten year passports by mail.

When applying by mail, send us your application through a courier service of your choice. You can visit our updated list of

courier (s) on our website. Please note that we are not responsible for the documents and fees submitted to any couriers. Although you can submit your application through any courier, all passports must be picked up through Saimon Overseas.

The courier fee for submitting your completed application package at one of Saimon Overseas Ltd.'s offices is BDT 575 (15% VAT is included).

Please visit our website <https://bd.usembassy.gov/> for more information.

Useful Police Contacts

Crime Division

Desk/Officer	Mobile	Email
Foreigners Emergency Assistance	01700-700700 (works 24/7)	foreign- erhelpdeskdp@gmail.com
Gulshan Police Station	9880234,895826	n/a
Deputy Commissioner	01713-373166	dcgulshan@dmp.gov.bd
Additional DC	01713-373167	adcgulshan@dmp.gov.bd
Assistant Commissioner	01713-373169	acgulshan@dmp.gov.bd
Officer in Charge	01713-373171	ocgulshan@dmp.gov.bd

Traffic Division

Desk/Officer	Mobile
Deputy Commissioner	01713-373225
Additional DC	01713-373226
Assistant Commissioner (Mohakhali)	01713-398499
Assistant Commissioner (Badda)	01713-398500
Assistant Commissioner (Gulshan)	01713-398497

Dhaka Metropolitan Police have assured the Embassy that all foreigners may utilize this email address: diplomathelpdesk@gmail.com

The Sylhet Metropolitan Police Foreigners Help Desk phone number is 01713-374364.



No Glasses in your New U.S. Passport Photo November 1st!



NO GLASSES IN YOUR NEW U.S. PASSPORT PHOTO
STARTING **NOVEMBER 1ST**



Beginning November 1st, 2016, customers applying for their U.S. passport or U.S. visa or renewing their U.S. passport must remove glasses for their photo.

Last year, more than 200,000 U.S. passport customers submitted poor quality photos which we couldn't accept. The #1 problem was glasses. We had to put their passport applications on hold because we couldn't clearly identify them from their photo. Many U.S. visa applications have been delayed due to the same problem.

If the photo of you in your unexpired U.S. passport or

U.S. visa has glasses, don't worry about it. You don't have to get a passport or visa now. Next time you renew your passport or apply for a new visa, though, you'll have to take your glasses off.

This policy change helps us and it helps you. We can see you more clearly now and you will experience fewer U.S. passport and U.S. visa application delays and can move faster through U.S. ports of entry. Don't get us wrong, we love your glasses, but take them off for your U.S. passport or U.S. visa photo.*

For more information on photos, check out

our passport photo requirements and photo examples or visa photo requirements and photo examples on travel.state.gov

*If you must wear eye glasses for medical reasons, you'll need to obtain and submit a signed statement with your U.S. passport or U.S. visa application from a medical professional or health practitioner.

You may use our photo cropping tool to correctly size your photo in travel.state.gov website.

The expats act as wardens on behalf of the U.S. State Department. Their voluntary role in the consular services program is specific in mission (help your fellow Americans) and broad in services (do whatever you can to achieve Goal A).

"I am often called upon to assist U.S. citizen travelers who encounter difficult and often confusing situations that require immediate assistance, from stolen passports and money, incarceration for breaking foreign laws, political unrest, falling ill and even personal conflicts resulting in physical assault," John Mackey, a four-year warden in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, wrote by email.

The program originated during the 1930s, when embassies relied on volunteers to disseminate critical information to citizens living abroad. The name derives from World War II air raid wardens who patrolled territories in the United Kingdom and United States. The service resembled a phone tree: Participants would knock on doors and ring up landlines to deliver messages ranging from administrative updates (absentee voting, Social Security benefits) to code-red warnings (evacuation meeting points, natural-disaster shelters). These days, most of the 276 overseas missions can dispatch information electronically. Technologi-

cal innovations have freed up the wardens to focus more on American tourists whose trips have taken an unpredictable turn down an unimaginable road.

"These people get themselves into trouble," said Adriana Michele, a New Yorker who has dedicated more than 25 years to volunteering in Cartagena.

The wardens can help them get out of it.

Community spirit

Who are the wardens and, more important, how can you flag one down if you're in a bind? Got a name and number?

The wardens are civilians — emphasis on non-State-Department employees — with strong ties to their community a la Mister Rogers. They are typically fluent in the culture, habits, layout and language of their adopted country. Elizabeth Gracon, a U.S. embassy official in Colombia, described them as "a local face on the ground."

Many of the volunteers have full-time jobs. Tommy Phillips, a three-year warden in China, is the chef-owner of Bread Rock Bistro, a popular expat restaurant in Yanji, in the northeastern province of Jilin. Jennifer O'Sulli-

van teaches yoga and runs a handful of bars and cafes with her husband in Siem Reap, Cambodia. Other wardens are retired or iced their careers to pursue humanitarian projects. The Wicks, for instance, left Silicon Valley to volunteer at a school in Cartagena and start a foundation. Despite the wardens' divergent backgrounds, they all share a charitable streak.

"They are Americans helping Americans," said Christine Fagan, a division chief in the department's Office of Overseas Citizens Services. "Also, the warden can give the local perspective." Wardens are found in every country with State Department presence. The size of the cadre depends on the destination and its level of development. "They can assist Americans who can't get to the embassy," Fagan said.

Because of the program's informal arrangement (for instance, there is no training or manual), officials do not have a global head count of participants. But they can provide a snapshot of the warden census map: Lebanon, 90; Thailand, 73; Honduras, 25; Bangladesh, 23; Togo, 22; Chad, 18. Colombia claims 25 wardens, including four in Cartagena.

Excerpt by Andrea Sachs; taken from The Washington Post Article, Dec 1, 2016

Fruity Fun Skewers

Ingredients:

- => 5 large strawberries, halved
- => 1/4 cantaloupe, cut into balls or cubes
- => 2 bananas, peeled and cut into chunks
- => 1 apple, cut into chunks
- => 20 skewers

Direction:

Prep. in 15mins
Ready in 15mins

Thread the strawberries, cantaloupe, banana and apple pieces alternately onto skewers, placing at least 2 pieces of fruit on each skewer. Arrange the fruit skewers decoratively on a serving platter.

Tips:

You should use different fruits of your choice but remember to use some variety of colored fruits, so that the platter will look colorful.



If you would like to submit your cooking recipe, please e-mail DhakaACS@state.gov.

All regular American Citizen Services are by appointment **only**. Walk-in hours are not available. To schedule an appointment online please visit the Embassy website at <https://bd.usembassy.gov/>



U.S. Department of State

U.S. Embassy Dhaka

American Citizen Services

Madani Avenue, Baridhara
Dhaka – 1212

Phone: 88 2 5566-2000

(Hours of Operation: Sun, Mon, Wed, Thu,
from 8:00 am - 4.00 pm)

E-mail: DhakaACS@state.gov

Website: <https://bd.usembassy.gov/>

Diplomacy in Action

ACS Services include:

- PASSPORT RENEWAL
- CONSULAR REPORTS OF BIRTH ABROAD
- CONSULAR REPORTS OF DEATH ABROAD
- NOTARIAL SERVICES
- ABSENTEE VOTING AND VOTER INFORMATION
- SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER APPLICATION
- MEDICAL EMERGENCY COORDINATION
- FEDERAL BENEFITS APPLICATION
- TREASURY CHECKS DISTRIBUTION
- EMERGENCY MONEY TRANSFER FACILITATION

Stay Connected



Upcoming Embassy Closures

January 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 New Year's	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15 Martin Luther King's	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

February 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19 President's Day	20	21 Martyrs Day	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

Notes: March has one holiday on the 26th (Sunday) as 'Bangladeshi Independence day'.
(*) Subject to change based on religious calendar.